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### College Football 150-year Anniversary (CFB150): Branding a sesquicentennial within sport

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**College Football 150-year Anniversary (CFB150):**

**Branding a sesquicentennial within sport**

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Undergraduate Honors Thesis

University of New Hampshire

College of Health and Human Services – Kinesiology: Sport Studies

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## **Introduction**

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1869 the College of New Jersey and Rutgers University played the first ever college football game (General, 2019). A lot has changed since that historic day, including the College of New Jersey renaming to Princeton University, but the game and tradition have largely stayed the same. Therefore, in 2019 college football celebrated its 150-year anniversary. In celebration of the historic milestone, a non-profit initiative was established, the College Football 150 (CFB150). The goal of this initiative was to honor the sesquicentennial of the sport of college football and the accompanying events, participants, and history.

The initial conception of this initiative occurred in 2017, over two years prior to the anniversary (Stark-Mason, 2019). The College Football Playoff, a postseason format adopted by National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I football in 2015, was largely involved in the origin of the CFB150 initiative ("College Football Playoff Chronology", 2019). The 10 commissioners of the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Division (FBS) conferences alongside University of Notre Dame's, an independent school within FBS, Athletics Director (University Communications | University of Notre Dame) make up a stakeholder organization for the College Football Playoff and had frequent preparatory conversations with ESPN, as ESPN serves as the primary media rights partner of the College Football Playoff ("College Football Playoff Chronology", 2019). The two parties identified that the 150<sup>th</sup> year anniversary would occur in 2019, and a celebration was in order (K. Weiberg, personal interview, February 17, 2020). Therefore, a stakeholder organization surrounding college football, largely consisting of the same FBS conference commissioners, created the initiative and hired a team to administer branding and marketing surrounding the celebration.

Leading this team was Kevin Weiberg, a former NCAA Division I conference commissioner, who served as Executive Director of the College Football 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Stark-Mason, 2019). Weiberg, having extensive experience at the NCAA Division I level, was brought on in August of 2017. He was faced with an eminent challenge, creating a cohesive branding initiative for a sport that spans multiple divisions and hundreds of collegiate programs. Three major goals were established by Kevin and the board of the CFB150. These goals were: create public awareness, obtain broad participation from those with vested interest in the sport, and utilize the anniversary to promote and raise awareness of the public sentiment of the sport of football (Stark-Mason, 2019). As the 2019 college football season preparation began in the spring of 2019 and ultimately kicked off in late August of the same year, Kevin and his team's CFB150 plan was finally put into action and viewed by the public.

All college football programs in the United States were invited to participate, and each institution enacted their unique customization on the initiative while remaining consistent to the overall branding of CFB150. This study focuses on the ways in which the CFB150 initiative was carried out, both in general and by individual institutions that chose to participate. Considering that the 150-year anniversary is extremely unique, in that no other sport of the caliber of NCAA college football has celebrated a sesquicentennial, there was little to no precedent for the curators to follow. At the same time, the ideas of branding, sport marketing, retro marketing, and nostalgia are not new. As the CFB150 initiative moved forward, the CFB150 organization enacted all four of these components to effectively execute the celebration. As this study investigated the initiative surrounding the anniversary, the purpose of this research was to identify branding and marketing strategies of the CFB150. There were three main research questions (RQs) that the researcher sought answers to:

RQ1: How was the College Football 150-year (CFB150) anniversary branded?

RQ2: What marketing tactics surrounded the CFB150 initiative?

RQ3: How did the sesquicentennial history play into the marketing and relatability of the CFB 150 for different audiences?

### **Review of Literature**

This study relied upon the current literature related to the topics surrounding the CFB150 initiative. More specifically, the author will expand and reflect upon the literature subjected on branding, sport marketing, retro marketing, and the history of college football.

### **Branding**

A brand is a collection of unique components that are in association or identification with a product or organization, utilized to distinguish from competitors (Keller, 1993). The process of branding is developing and implementing strategies that showcase the distinguishing features and advantages associated with a brand (Richelieu & Pons, 2006). As identified by McGehee and Cianfrone (2019), due to the increased popularity and growth of business in the industry of collegiate athletics, athletic departments and universities have become focused on the importance of branding. Brand equity is the measurement in value of the brand by means of perceived quality, brand awareness, brand associations, and brand loyalty for a brand (Aaker, 1991; Gladden, Milne, & Sutton, 1998; Ross, Russell, & Bang 2008). Branding can be classified as successful at the point at which value or equity is created by the strategic management of an organization's brand (McGehee and Cianfrone, 2019).

Richelieu (2004) developed that the three quintessential steps in developing brand equity for a sport organization are: define the identity of the sport organization, position the sport

organization in the market, and then develop a brand strategy with marketing actions. The third step of developing a brand strategy with marketable actions is what drives adjustments in the organization's brand equity. Yet, identifying and positioning are crucial for the brand strategy to cause an impact in the sport organization's brand equity (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005).

Additionally, sports brands develop through the interaction of various actors, as media, sponsors, fans, and the local community constantly evolve the brand of the organization. Therefore, managers of sport brands must coordinator a platform for actors and their activities to enhance the identity of the brand. A primary way in which to provide this platform can be digitally, as digital technologies can assist in the communication of the sport brand identity (Ströbel & Germelmann, 2020). It is evident that the exponential development technology, especially in the realm of media, has vastly expanded people's social network and empowered the average sport fan to engage in self-branding activities in which individuals subject themselves as a brand and markets said brand to interested audiences in his/her social network (Wang, Braunstein-Minkove, Baker, Bo Li, & Zang, 2020; Marwick, 2010; Rampersad, 2008; Resnick, Cheng, Simpson, & Lourenço, 2016). Although, digital marketing strategies are not the sole component of marketing within sport. Sport marketing as a topic is far more extensive, especially in the processes of branding.

## **Sport Marketing**

Sport marketing is recognized as its own academic discipline and thus requires examination as such, opposed to traditional marketing (Chalip, 2006). Traditional marketing elements are composed of four primary categories, often referred to as the marketing mix or "four Ps." These are price, product, place, and promotion (Grönroos, 2004; Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2014). The foundation of sport marketing originated as a tool utilized by organizations to enhance their

commercial activities and increase, for the most part, ticket sales. Yet the use and overall concept grew and developed with the growth of the sport industry (Manoli, 2018). By 1983, two major ideas came to the forefront of sport marketing. The first was the idea that sport marketing was not just a concept for commercialization, but instead consisted of a broad range of promotional elements that includes aspects such as commercial sponsorship, advertising and publicity (Meenaghan, 1983; Manoli, 2018). The second was that there are three distinctive types of sport marketing; marketing to promote fan interest, marketing to promote sport participation, and marketing to promote consumption of products through sport (Mullin, 1983; Manoli, 2018). Since those two greater conceptual shifts occurred in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the evolution of the sport marketing field has continued. Today's sports brands are enabled with vast opportunities to market their products and services at a revolutionary level, due to technological advancements. Organizations are not limited by the methods of traditional advertising, publicity, or athlete endorsement any longer. Instead they are able to utilize outlets such as the Internet, mobile technologies, and more to engage with consumers (Geurin, A. N., & Burch, L. M., 2017).

The primary consumers of sport marketing are fans. Fans can interact with sport brands and organizations through consumption, but also promote the brand meaning and have rituals that establish a fan culture. With the fans' high identification and emotional relationship with a sport organization or brand, brand meaning is established. This is furthered by the technological advancements that allow for further fan interaction to occur (Ströbel & Germelmann, 2020). Fans create a self-image in which their association and relationship to a sport organization is established. An organization's exploration into the desired self-image of their fans provides a new element of sport marketing that may shine light on the best practices in branding and growing the relationship between the two parties (Wang, J. J., Braunstein-Minkove, J. R., Baker, T. A., Bo Li, & Zhang, J.



J., 2020). As a sport brand looks to best engaged with the self-image of their fans, retro marketing has been an increasingly common practice.

## **Retro marketing**

Retro marketing, or retro branding, is defined by paying homage to the historical aspects of a brand while incorporating the relevant modern trends and technologies (Brown, 1999). As Scola & Gordon (2019) explain, retro marketing is not when marketers are reusing marketing strategies of the past, instead it is when marketers create new strategies and practices that incorporate elements from the history of the brand or organization. In contrast to the four Ps of traditional marketing, a four As of retro branding were developed: allegory (symbolism in stories of the revived brand), arcadia (the utopian feeling of world's past), aura (the strong sense of authenticity that originally was felt by the original work of the brand), and antinomy (the scientific and technological movement that is nearly unstoppable and is the epicenter for people's desire to return to simpler times) (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003). In the context of sport, celebrating a team or organization's milestones is a prevalent way to utilize retro marketing, a practice that is relatively convenient and has seen success (Scola & Gordon, 2019).

When incorporating retro marketing practices, the concept of nostalgia may also be utilized. During the 1600's, nostalgia was a medical term that described an ailment; however, its definition evolved and is now known as a psychological emotion of longing for the past (Batcho, 1995; 2013). The feeling of nostalgia may elicit positive perceptions of the past that aid the sense of continuity in one's life (Sedikides, Wildschut, Gaertner, Routledge, & Arndt, 2008). Nostalgic feelings have been identified as a significant aspect in overall sport heritage (Ramshaw and Gammon, 2005). However, although retro marketing often involves concepts of nostalgia, they are not equals. Rather, nostalgia refers to the emotion that is created from retro marketing

practices, whereas retro marketing is marketing using modern technology and strategies while hinting at strategies of the past (Brown, 2019; Scola & Gordon, 2019). Additionally, it is important to mention that feelings of nostalgia are perhaps not dependent upon age. An individual who did not experience the original, in this case marketing, practices may feel the emotion of “vicarious nostalgia”, nostalgia regarding a time they were not alive (Holbrook, 1993; Merchant & Rose, 2013). As Scola & Gordon (2019) describe, the feeling of nostalgia, specifically in sport, is extremely significant due to the lived history a team displays in addition to the multiple levels of success sports teams, organizations, and brands can accomplish. In the case of a sport with an extended history, the opportunity to take advantage of retro marketing and nostalgia are even more prevalent.

### **History of College Football**

College football is a sport that has been around since November 6, 1869. It was on that historic day that the first intercollegiate football game was played. The two institutions that competed were Rutgers University and the College of New Jersey, Rutgers emerging victorious with a score of 6-4 (General, 2019). The game was played in front of an estimated 100 spectators, who observed a game in which 25 players representing their respective institution were on the field at a time. With 50 players actively playing at once, 10 games made up the entire contest, a game ending each time a team scored. It was not until November 23, 1876 that representatives from Princeton University, Columbia University, Harvard University, and Yale University proposed the first American football rules. The rules proposed included a system of downs, 11 members from each team on the field at a time, and a line of scrimmage. However, this more modern iteration of the rules did not get adopted until 1890 (General, 2019).

Since that initial game date in 1869, it is approximated that more than 5.33 million people have played college football (“College Football Prepares to Celebrate 150th Anniversary”, 2019). With the exponential participation, the growth of the game was eminent. On August 6, 1973 the NCAA, the majority governing body for collegiate athletics, separated college athletics into three divisions, Division I, Division II, and Division III (General, 2019). This allowed for further growth within the game and increased competition between member institutions of similar resources and capabilities. An additional split has since occurred between the Football Bowl Division (FBS) and Football Championship Division (FCS) within Division I to best appropriate the growth and opportunity for success among college football programs.

Overall, including National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and independent schools, the National Football Foundation recorded 778 collegiate football programs in the United States for the 2019-20 season, a record high (“Record 778 Colleges and Universities Now Offering Football”, 2018). With such increased growth since the origin of the game, 150 years of college football presents a level of history that is nearly unprecedented for any one sport, and especially one of such vast involvement. In approaching the 2019-20 season, the popularity of the game was obvious, as the 2018-19 season report showcased, “College football ranks as the nation’s second most popular sport with 47 million fans attending games in 2018 and 366 regular season telecasts reaching more than 163 million unique fans and 38 postseason bowl games reaching 90 million,” (“2018-19 Report: Amazing College Football”, 2019). This enabled unique branding and marketing tactics to occur for the CFB150 initiative.

## **Methods**

### **Research design and participants**

To examine the research questions that were identified, qualitative measures were utilized. More specifically, in-depth interviews were conducted. Potential participants for these in-depth interviews were those who worked in marketing for a collegiate football department or had direct relations to the greater CFB150 organization. Outreach to these potential participants was made via LinkedIn or e-mail addresses listed under staff directories for collegiate athletic departments. Priority was given to participants who had close relationships with the branding and marketing of college football 150-year anniversary, such as institutions who had executed efforts surrounding the CFB150 in 2019. Direct outreach was the only form of communication, and little reference to alternative participants was given by targeted participants. The author was successful in identifying, contacting, and recruiting participants who had direct interactions with the marketing and branding of the CFB150. Each participant was guaranteed complete anonymity which incentivized participants to be more willing to share their experience and opinions with increased honesty. A total of five interviews were conducted with a total of six professionals who represented the CFB150 organization, the Chick-Fil-A College Football Hall of Fame, and Division I college athletics. In-depth interviews were conducted in the spring of 2020, following the conclusion of the CFB150 initiatives. Participants were actively recruited until there was sufficient data to identify developed themes.

### **Procedures**

The author utilized qualitative measures via in-depth interviews with professionals with direct interaction with the CFB150 organization and initiative. Said interviews had a script of

questions (Appendix A) that was prepared for the in-depth interviews, but the list of questions was utilized as a general structure to examine more wholistic themes. Not all questions listed on Appendix A were asked, nor were the questions asked done so verbatim. Instead, interview questions were asked as the author saw most appropriate, in order to gain the most relevant insight from the participant. In-depth interviews were conducted via phone as it was the most consistent way to appropriately execute in-depth interviews with participants. The fact that participants were located across North America and the author was not in the capacity to travel for face-to-face interviews isolated phone interviews as the most effective means. All interviews were audio recorded and stored on the author's computer, as well as on a shared Box folder between the author and the author's faculty advisor. Interviews averaged 30 minutes in length. The length of the interview as well as the questions posed by the author allowed the participants to give insight into how they experienced and perceived the branding and marketing strategies of the college football 150-year (CFB150) initiative. After each interview was completed, the author transcribed the audio recording of each interview independently.

## **Analysis**

After each interview was transcribed, coding was implemented on each transcription independently. The primary coding method utilized was open coding, as codes were assigned to the raw data based on key-themes that are identified through data examination. By applying codes to the raw data, the author was able to examine how the data supported or contradicted the research questions that initially led the study (Decuir-Gunby, Marshall, & McCulloch, 2011). Yet, as themes emerged from the data, the research questions and subsequent interview questions were able to evolve to best align with the key themes identified. The open coding process best supported the author's goal in identifying and developing key-themes from the data instead of drawing them

from existing theories (Scola & Gordon, 2019). This was done to address the research questions which again are:

RQ1: How was the College Football 150-year (CFB150) anniversary branded?

RQ2: What marketing tactics surrounded the CFB150 initiative?

RQ3: How did the sesquicentennial history play into the marketing and relatability of the CFB 150 for different audiences?

## **Results**

Through the coding process, the author was able to address all three research questions. The first, focused on how the College Football 150-year (CFB150) anniversary was branded, was supported by two main themes. The themes were how the CFB150 organization branded itself via logo development and promotional assets, as well as how individual organizations participated in the branding of the CFB150 initiative. Individual, institutional participation was done through voluntary participation in the opportunities provided by the greater CFB150 organization as well as creating their own unique branding adjustments. The second research question regarded the marketing tactics surrounding the CFB150 initiative. In the exploration of this question, three themes were identified. They were marketing through special events, social media, and traditional media outlets. The third research question addressed how the sesquicentennial history played into the marketing and relatability of the CFB150 for different audiences. In examining this question, three themes were isolated, these were projected via three primary audiences: fans, alumni, and students. This section will showcase the author's demonstration of how the three research questions were answered by elaborating upon each theme through representative quotes from the interview participants.

## Branding

The initial purpose of this study was to identify the branding and marketing strategies of the CFB150 initiative. In addressing the branding efforts of the CFB150, interviewed participants provided insight and perspective into how their respective organizations branded the sesquicentennial. The greater CFB150 organization did so primarily through logo development and promotional assets. Individual institutions had voluntary participation by incorporating assets provided by the CFB150, as well as creating their own customizable assets.

**Logo development.** As one of the three primary goals of the CFB150 initiative was to achieve high public awareness in that 2019 was the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sport, creating a cohesive brand centered around a logo was the appropriate focus. Thus, Subject 1 who worked directly with the CFB150 organization explained this focus, “Early on we decided we needed as strong visual identity as possible, so we actually hired SME, a Learfield company, to assist with the development of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary logo.” Additional levels of the NCAA as well as engagement with shoe and apparel companies assisted in developing the branding mark. In isolating the branding efforts around one universal logo, this enabled the CFB150 to further market itself as a unified effort both broadly and through different individual institutions. As another primary goal of the CFB150 was to get as much participation as possible from college football stakeholder groups and organizations, including individual universities across all divisions, it was important for individual institutional to utilize the logo in their branding efforts as well. Several colleges and universities created their own logo and mark for the 150-year anniversary, typically one that incorporated the central CFB150 mark. As Subject 5, a marketer at a university that participated in the CFB150 greater branding, discussed:

In an effort to really bridge and partner with them and draw that connection to, hey as we celebrate our season, we want to be a part of that national storyline and their efforts that it's kind of one united front. You'll see their exact mark is really the center part of our logo, so I think that was something that was a great decision and really something that helped bring those two worlds together.

The incorporation of the greater CFB150 logo in the branding that individual institutions created, led to a successful initiative. By encapsulating the mission of the greater CFB150 in conjunction of identification of smaller consumer bases, the anniversary had a broad reach. As Subject 1 explains, "this could only work if the universities themselves and colleges embraced it." Whether it be the College Football Hall of Fame putting the 150 logo on all of their Fan Ambassador shirts or a 150 branded helmet on the three story helmet wall (in which every four-year institution that plays college football is represented), utilizing the logo creates further brand identity.

**Promotional Assets.** Aside from logo development, the CFB150 also established promotional assets that could be utilized by their organization as well as participating institutions. While logo is important in branding, it is only one component. As one professional, a marketer at a participating institution, describes:

That brand component is really what takes center stage as you move into the season. And that's every piece of content that comes out, from our social media channels, maybe commercials we are running, it's how are our players presenting themselves in media appearances. All of that contributes to your brand.

In order for the CFB150 to, again, meet their goal of having high participation they needed to develop promotional assets that they could be easy to access and universally used. Therefore, the



CFB150 brought in The Marketing Arm, a Dallas based marketing agency in late December of 2017 to conduct market research in identifying which attributes of college football would be most attractive to consumers. Through this process, the education opportunity that the sport provides, the leadership qualities that young people gain from participation, and the community building aspect of the sport were isolated as attributes that consumers found attractive in college football. As an interview participant explained, these attractive attributes were crucial in branding the CFB150. This individual mentions the promotional assets created by the CFB150 organization, “centered on those three pillars [attractive attributes].” In doing so, scoreboard graphics, program ads, social media graphics and more were developed for individual institutions to utilize in their personal branding efforts. Subject 1 provided insight to this situation:

We had a dedicated section of the website where, if you’re the marketing director at New Hampshire, you could register as a user, and you could, download promotional assets that could be customized to your school, that could carry your school colors, your own logo, but would also have the thematic approach of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. And that turned out to be very successful. We got; I think over 640 registered users from across the country.

Through individual participation, the use of promotional assets that were developed by the greater CFB150 were a catalyst. These promotional assets, in addition to patches on team uniforms or helmet decals offered as a less labor intensive alternative, as well as field stencils with the CFB150 logo that was utilized across the country including at the College Football Playoff National Championship game in early 2020, allowed for a cohesive branding effort to enhance participation and subsequent visibility.

## Marketing Tactics

As the initial purpose of this study was to identify the branding and marketing strategies of the CFB150 initiative, the second research question was subjected with what marketing tactics surrounded the CFB150 initiative. In examining the data, three main themes became evident in how the initiative was marketed. These were through special events, social media, and traditional media outlets.

**Special Events.** With the unique and nearly unprecedented nature of the sesquicentennial within sport, a clear opportunity presented itself for participating organizations to host special events. Given the celebration surrounded the sport of college football, if a particular institution did not expect significant success or publicity surrounding the performance of their team, they were able to utilize the anniversary as the primary marketing tactic toward consumers. As one professional stated, “we knew that for us it had to be something that wasn’t just a complementary piece but a focal point. We knew that it was the only thing we had.” Thus, special events were seen all over the spectrum of college football. This included one highlighted institution that created a 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme for every home game and created corresponding giveaways for those theme games, including vintage helmet magnets. Videoboards were utilized during timeouts to feature highlighting moments from colleges and universities’ football history. As a marketer at a participating institution describes, “We really looked at that as a great mechanism to tell those stories was to really brand up our home venue and some of our main attractions on campus.” This was specifically done through aerial signage that commemorated the historic nature of the year, concourse banners, and served as an overall, “great way to add some additional branding to the stadium to add to that additional storytelling.”

Other special events included the game between Dartmouth University and Princeton University on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019. This game took place at Yankee Stadium in an enormous effort by all three major parties involved to convert a baseball stadium into a functional and enjoyable football venue. As Princeton played in the first ever college football game, they in partnership with their original opponent, co-lit the Empire State building in New York City three days prior to the game at Yankee Stadium, the actual 150-year anniversary on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Rutgers University paid homage to the first ever college football game by recruiting theater students to reenact the first game two hours before their home season kicked off. The reenactment included traditional clothing of 1869 and a rehearsed performance. The event drew several hundred fans.

The College Football Hall of Fame worked with its partners to allow free entry into the venue for the month of August, in honor of 150 years of college football. They also brought special exhibits to their facility, including the desk of General Douglas MacArthur, the founder of the National Football Foundation and College Football Hall of Fame. The College Football Hall of Fame's MacArthur Bowl trophy, as well as their incoming hall of fame class, carried the theme of the CFB150 for the 2019 season.

Perhaps one of the most unique and significant special events hosted in honor of the college football 150-year anniversary was the 2019 Cortaca Jug game. As one professional speaks to the event:

[The] Chapter of the National of the National Football Foundation based in New York New Jersey area promoted the Cortaca Jug game between Cortland State and Ithaca, and moved that game to the meadowlands, MetLife Stadium for this year, and they had a record attendance for that game and it kind of carried an anniversary theme. It's a rivalry game at the Division III level, and I think they had over 40,000 attend that game. So, it was another

example of the way the anniversary was kind of a platform to do some special things around games at the lower level, that I think was well received by the public.

This example, as well as the other unique events that occurred honoring and surrounding the CFB150 initiative were those that would not have been present if not the anniversary was not occurring.

**Social Media.** As the CFB150 initiative looked to gain as broad participation as possible, a clear medium for doing so was through social media. The greater organization brought on board the LDWW Group, a public relations firm based out of Dallas, Texas. The LDWW group assisted in media placements and earned media, in particular helping to manage social media channels during the 2019 season. The overall social media impact of the CFB150 was a great success. Generating over 100,000 mentions of the anniversary over the course of 2019, close to 13,000 of which were via news and broadcast stories and more than 90,000 Twitter mentions. Yet these statistics only include results through November of 2019, not capturing the college football postseason. One participant mentioned, “the CFB150 hashtag (the primary means of mentioning the anniversary via social media) was everywhere. Schools were using it. Fans were using it. Even players were using it.” Not only were the mention results high, but the mentions on Facebook and other social media platforms were reported by Subject 1 as, “98% positive or neutral mentions.” As individual institutions reported their marketing tactics, social media was certainly one of the most prevalent. As expressed by multiple professionals “we did a lot of social...”, “we also were in the social space pretty heavily”, and “we did a lot of digital activation, so both our central and football social media accounts really pushing this initiative throughout the year.” This proved to be a quite successful tactic, one participant even reporting a social media post made surrounding

the CFB150 initiative, “was like our most watched video ever on social media, at least in my 5 years here.”

One institution engaged with the student body on social through different means. Subject 4 mentions their use of social media via their students, where they, “did an influencer campaign among our student body, where students who had a lot of Instagram followers were asked to post a very specific message at a very specific time, and that worked well for us to drive awareness.” The overall use of social media has a variety of uses and undoubtedly the CFB150 initiative was able to tap into a lot of those and do so successfully.

**Traditional Media.** The third theme encapsulated in marketing tactics was through traditional media outlets. These are identified here as primarily television and electronic media. As college football is typically broadcasted and consumed via television, media outlets such as ESPN, FOX, CBS Sports, and other networks that air college football games had organic interest in producing media for the CFB150 initiative. ESPN ran a series of documentaries that covered much of the history of college football, and according to one of the participants “ESPN in particular did a great job in promoting the anniversary. They had a lot of unique content, we also had good cooperation from the other major broadcast networks in using the logo, really highlighting the overall anniversary throughout the year.” But the same professional also stated:

We needed the strong support of ESPN that has the dominant number of games that they televise annual and their position in the postseason is so big. We needed their strong support, and they were a great partner and they were an early adopter of the anniversary as a theme and something they could promote in association with the season as a whole.

As this individual describes the partnership was crucial and necessary to the success of the CFB150 initiative, but also provides a symbiotic result for ESPN, as well as the other major media outlets, as they can produce content. Other, perhaps non-traditional, television stations partnered with the anniversary as well. The College Football Hall of Fame had a partnerships with both Turner Classic Movies for a weekly series of Hall of Famers that tied the celebration of college football to classic movies, as well as with The Weather Channel that connected to the anniversary with celebratory facets in their Saturday (game day) broadcasts during the college football season.

## **Audiences**

The third, and final, purpose of this study was to identify how the sesquicentennial history played into the marketing and relatability of the CFB150 for different audiences. There were three main audiences that were identified in engaging with the CFB150 through speaking with participants of this study. The three main audiences were fans, alumni, and students. Each of these three core groups were marketed to differently for the CFB150 initiative, with the goal of having greatest relatability with each one of them individually.

**Fans.** The most prominent group that was marketed to for the CFB150 initiative was fans. Fandom is a unique concept in that it ranges on a broad spectrum of attribution and dedication to an organization or group. However, one professional identified that, “I would say that the people that were most excited by [the CFB 150 campaign] tended to be that [participating institution] football diehard fan, and that’s 10% of the fanbase, 5% of the fanbase.” Yet, it became clear through research that fandom was present in both highly and less invested individuals. For example, another participant stated that, “obviously those people that are closest to football and closest to the football circle see a little bit more of the national activation around that and are probably more of your clientele.” This further supports the fact that a broad group of general fans

were marketed to and engaged with as part of the CFB150, even though some fans may be subjected to engagement through media or football consumption more than others. This was a statement theme and was reiterated by another individual as they said, “I think we saw a lot of great folks who we know are kind of outside of that normal football fan sphere. So, I think it was a great way to tap into a lot of our different audiences. Tap into the folks who might have an athletic connection through a different sport, but really saw this as a great way to come together.” Both the general and “diehard” fans were marketed to in similar ways, as marketers left involvement levels up to individuals to engage. Actions such as attending CFB150 related events, engaging on social media, sending memorabilia to individual institutions or the College Football Hall of Fame, and more were all taken by fans after they were exposed to the initiative.

The most prevalent way in which fans were exposed to the CFB150 initiative was through the jersey patch. Subject 1 perhaps explains fan engagement most appropriately as they describe,

The uniform is fairly common, especially for the schools that have big fan followings, for them to announce sometime in the spring what their uniform for the coming fall is going to look like and, there were several announcements early on by teams that they would be wearing the 150 anniversary patch, and that got some fan engagement early on. And then, obviously once [the] season got underway and everyone started to see it, that raised more fan involvement, and with social media, um, the idea of “what’s that patch and what does it mean?”, that started to get some further commentary going on the anniversary.”

The inquisitory mentality that many fans took in regards to the CFB 150 logo inspired their greater involvement, and dependent upon their interest level fans engaged with the initiative more than others.

**Alumni.** As recognized previously, fans that exist outside the traditional “fan sphere” engaged with the CFB150 initiative. These nontraditional audiences ultimately became classified as fans, just with different attribution and dedication levels than the “diehard” fan. One of these atypical audiences of fans were alumni, specifically alumni of colleges and universities without attachment to their respective college’s football program. The CFB150 was still utilized to target these individuals. Professionals introduced broader techniques when doing so in order to target this audience in the most appropriate way. Princeton University, one of the original two teams to participate in the first ever college football game, sought to heavily engage their greater alumni base via the CFB150 anniversary. Princeton additionally had the benefit of the 2019 football season being the sesquicentennial of Princeton football, which they could utilize to relate and engage with their alumni audience. The special event of having a Princeton football game at Yankee Stadium enabled an alternative event for alumni to participate in, especially as most of the audience would not typically engage in or attend a traditional game at Princeton Stadium, the home venue. In situations like this, one professional said the CFB150:

Really make that a broader celebration beyond even just the [institution’s] football community but have that be a [institution] university type celebration and getting some [institution’s alumni] off the bench who may not have had interest in coming to [institution’s] stadium for a game but how do we use that as a greater university initiative.

This was especially true in the case of Princeton University as alumni utilized the game at Yankee Stadium to create a small class reunion type celebration. This included creating hotel blocks, dinner gatherings during the weekend, and pregame festivities. One individual attached to the weekend and its alumni engagement mentions they, “definitely saw some classes really take some leadership and kind of mapping out kind of a great weekend for their particular folks.” Events



like those in New York City surrounding the Princeton football game and a greater alumni audience engagement were enabled by the CFB150 initiative.

**Students.** The CFB 150 initiative additionally enabled engagement with the student audience. Many colleges and universities' most attainable audience is the current student body. As not yet alumni, but perhaps not necessarily classifying themselves as traditional fans, students engage differently than other audiences. At the same time, in being in such close proximity to the institution and its athletics, including football, they are an excellent audience to tap into for the CFB150 initiative.

One institution, as mentioned by Subject 4, "did an influencer campaign among our student body, where students who had a lot of Instagram followers were asked to post a very specific message at a very specific time, and that worked well for us to drive awareness." This initiative utilized participating students as the marketers for the organization's marketing strategy towards other students. This allows for the audience to be engaged internally, perhaps the most relatable practicum possible. Another professional describes their engagement strategies with the student audience:

We had some special offerings for our student body. Provided some bus transportation options. We were able to provide some alternative pricing. Had some different on-campus activations to distribute those tickets and had some university, internal university partners sponsor different subsets of student tickets. So, it was a great way to get them excited.

These strategies are perhaps a bit more standard in practice, but nonetheless are effective in providing relatable alternatives to participation in the greater CFB150 initiatives that the Subject's institution is conducting.

In terms of engagement success with an audience, Subject 4 speaks to their experience by stating, “the one I am most proud of, that [audience] we thought maybe they wouldn’t care but by the end of the season they did care, was the student body. I mean we a lot of things to target them.” It was evident that the strategies were successful as this individual continues by stating, “our student body was one that ended up, maybe at the beginning of the campaign we weren’t so sure they would be into, but by the end of the campaign we saw a certain pride in our students.” Engaging the student body, while seemingly challenging for professionals to do, helped the overall success of the CFB150 initiative campaign.

### **Discussion**

Given the uniqueness of the College Football 150 (CFB150) initiative in celebrating a sesquicentennial within sport, the relatively unprecedented branding and marketing strategies showcased via the CFB150 gave insight into the ways in which major sport anniversaries can find success through preparation and execution. With the close proximity to the execution timeline, there is little to no research and analysis into the CFB150. This study gave primary findings into how the initiative was conducted as well as some of the impacts that the CFB150 had. By in-depth interviews with professionals associated with the CFB150 initiative, and the subsequent coding of said interviews, the author was able to find answers to all three research questions. Regarding the first research question, how the College Football 150-year (CFB150) anniversary branded, the two main themes identified were branding through logo development and promotional assets. Both themes were utilized on a greater CFB150 organization scale, as well as by individual participating institutions. The second research question asks, what marketing tactics surrounded the CFB150 initiative. Three main themes answered this question including: special events, social media, and traditional media outlets. The third research question addressed how the sesquicentennial history

played into the marketing and relatability of the CFB150 for different audiences. There were three audiences that found engagement and interacted with the initiative differently. These were fans, alumni, and students.

When interviewing participants in this study, several successes of the CFB150 were determined by these individuals. The successes identified will assist in the future implementation of branding and marketing anniversary celebrations within sport. With the themes pertaining to each research question having been discussed previously through representative quotes and analysis, this section will address the practical implications and influence this study may have on literature and future research.

### **Branding a Sport Anniversary**

Through Richelieu's (2004) three quintessential steps in developing brand equity for a sport organization: define the identity of the sport organization, position the sport organization in the market, and then develop a brand strategy with marketing actions, the greater CFB150 organization as well as individual institutions who incorporated the CFB150 in their branding strategies enacted each of Richelieu's three steps. The CFB150 organization did so through their logo development and promotional assets, while enabling individual institutions to customize their own respective 150-year anniversary logos and promotional assets too. This helped to establish the anniversary at participating institutions, while coinciding with the greater CFB150 initiative.

In setting out the primary goals at the beginning of the initiative as: create public awareness, obtain a broad participation from those with vested interest in the sport, and utilize the anniversary to promote and raise awareness of the public sentiment of the sport of football, the CFB150 organization set to accomplish all three via their branding (Stark-Mason, 2019). With brand equity

being the measurement in value of the brand by means of perceived quality, brand awareness, brand associations, and brand loyalty, while branding is classified as successful at the point at which value or equity is created by the strategic management of an organization's brand, the CFB150 initiative can clearly accomplish their three goals successfully via establishing and executing effective brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Gladden, Milne, & Sutton, 1998; Ross, Russell, & Bang 2008; McGehee and Cianfrone, 2019). By allowing for individual institutions to customize their own logos and promotional assets, on a voluntary basis, the CFB150 organization enabled branding and marketing efforts to be carried out by participating institutions. In doing so, retro marketing efforts and nostalgia were more relatable and engaging for different audiences. By having member participation from individual institutions, the CFB150 was engaging directly with existing audiences such as fans, alumni, and students of that institution. At the same time, the branding effort had the greater support and backing from the overarching CFB150 organization. This incorporated the existing brand equity of the participating institutions while compiling onto the brand equity of the greater CFB150 initiative, leading to success.

Marketing tactics such as special events, social media, and traditional media all encapsulate the ideas of retro marketing. Practices such as 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary themed games, showcasing historic highlights via social media, and having aired documentaries of exciting milestones in the sport all inflict the emotion of nostalgia of the history of college football. This is done by utilizing retro marketing and simultaneously working to create or reinforce brand equity. Scola & Gordon's (2019) explanation that retro marketing creates new strategies with incorporated elements from the history of the brand or organization is perfectly displayed through highlighting the history of college football with the CFB150 campaign. This is especially the case with modern technological advancements like social media, audiences can engage with the history of their institution and feel

a sense of personal or vicarious nostalgia without having the same geographic attachment to the institution. This relatively new marketing strategy employs hints to the past, showcasing retro marketing, and hopefully eliciting nostalgia to enhance consumers' relationship with college football. Audiences of fans, alumni, and students of individual institutions are perhaps the best example of this as they have a preexisting connection to their institution, and the CFB150 was utilized to rekindle or enhance that connection. Such retro marketing practices can lead to nostalgia, the psychological emotion of longing for the past (Batcho, 1995; 2013).

The concept of antinomy within retro marketing as presented by Brown, Kozinets & Sherry (2003) maximizes on nostalgia. Antinomy being the inevitable scientific and technological progressions that are occurring, resulting in people's desire to return to simpler times. In this case the simpler times are located within the history of college football. Audiences engage with this desire for the past by consuming elements of the CFB150 initiative on a national and individual institution basis. This consumption may remind them of their personal experiences, eliciting of nostalgia. Audience members could experience nostalgia in their own relation to college football or have a feeling of vicarious nostalgia in which they are relating to the grander history of the game as it has impacted their lives or their respective institution. With the CFB150 overarching initiative as a platform to brand and market the anniversary, the localized engagement by individual intuitions is what displayed the success and effectiveness of branding and marketing the anniversary.

### **Successes of Branding a Sport Anniversary**

When discussing the branding of the CFB150 initiative, professionals were asked about how they categorized the success of the initiative. According to Scola & Gordon (2019), in the context of sport, celebrating a team or organization's milestones is a prevalent way to utilize retro

marketing, a practice that is relatively convenient and has seen success. Retro marketing practices such as ESPN's 150 years of college football documentary series, individual institutions creating their own historic highlights, and general social media campaigns revolving around the anniversary of the game occurred. These practices, and other marketing tactics of the CFB150 initiative, found respective success. The success is primarily determined by high consumption and engagement metrics, as noted by over 100,000 recorded mentions of the anniversary over the course of 2019 and examples of social media posts relating to the anniversary. One such example was determined by a participant who noted a CFB150 related post being the "most watched video ever on social media, at least in my 5 years here." The diversity of engagement also showcased success, displaying that multiple platforms were utilized by consumers. Of the more than 100,000 mentions, 13,000 were via news and broadcast stories and more than 90,000 Twitter mentions. This reaffirms not only the success of the campaign, but also the popularity of the sport, given 163 million unique fans were reached during the previous college football regular season ("2018-19 Report: Amazing College Football", 2019).

However, despite the diversity of media, the majority of engagement came via social media. Ströbel & Germelmann (2020) note, sports brands develop through the interaction of various actors, as media, sponsors, fans, and the local community constantly evolve the brand of the organization. Therefore, managers of sport brands must coordinator a platform for actors and their activities to enhance the identity of the brand. A primary way in which to provide this platform can be digitally, as digital technologies can assist in the communication of the sport brand identity. The exponential development of technology, especially in the realm of media, has vastly expanded people's social network and empowered the average sport fans to engage in self-branding activities in which individuals subject themselves as a brand and markets it to interested

audiences in his/her social network. An organization's exploration into the desired self-image of their fans provides a new element of sport marketing that may explain best practices in branding and growing the relationship between the two parties (Wang, J. J., Braunstein-Minkove, J. R., Baker, T. A., Bo Li, & Zhang, J. J., 2020). Through the opportunity to engage in self-branding with consumers that social media presents, it is evident why the vast majority of professionals expressed their heavy use of social media to brand and grow the relationship with consumers during the CFB150 initiative. Through self-branding activities the branding of the CFB150 could be furthered and find success.

As with branding success, formed through brand equity and value, the responses from subjects also revolved around the topics of perceived quality, brand awareness, brand associations, and brand loyalty (Aaker, 1991; Gladden, Milne, & Sutton, 1998; Ross, Russell, & Bang 2008). The area that seemed most relevant to participating individuals was brand associations, that were experienced through engagement with the CFB150 initiative. As addressed by several professionals, the initiative engaged fans that were outside of the traditional football fan sphere. As stated by Ströbel & Germelmann (2020), the primary consumers of sport marketing are fans. Fans can interact with sport brands, such as the CFB150, and organizations through consumption, but can also promote the brand meaning and have rituals that establish a fan culture. With the fans' high identification and emotional relationship with a sport brand or organization, brand meaning is established (Ströbel & Germelmann, 2020). In interacting with different audiences, perhaps growing their relationship with the sport brand or organization to classify them as fans, the overall branding and brand equity efforts are enhanced. This reflects how other marketers felt regarding the success of the initiative. As reiterated by a professional, "I think the qualitative impact is certainly something we would speak to in saying we felt really good about what we accomplished,

and again qualitative being across a lot of those different audiences,” when speaking to the importance of engaging with audiences leading to success. It became clear through the findings that engaging with audiences, even those with a less dedicated attachment to college football at an individual institution or broadly, by utilizing branding and marketing practices that took advantage of nostalgia was a key component to success.

While some of the impacts of the CFB150 yet to be determined, given exact figures and quantitative data yet to be finalized or released, as pointed out by one marketer, “I think some of those questions are yet to be answered cause a lot of it will be to see what impact that has as we kind of move into the next year or two both from an attendance, and recruiting, and engagement standpoint...”. Yet what speaks volumes is that all individuals participating in this study deemed the CFB150 initiative a success. This determination of success was classified by participants both at individual institutions as well as those who had relationship to the campaign as part of a stakeholder group.

Regarding the logo development, promotional assets, marketed tactics, and audience engagement that all surrounded the initiative the CFB150 enabled a robust branding and marketing effort for individual institutions to participate in, despite their size or program’s success. Given, the process of branding is developing and implementing strategies that showcase the distinguishing features and advantages associated with a brand, for some institutions, the CFB150 was simply an added bonus for their already successful football branding and marketing strategies (Richelieu & Pons, 2006). However, for other, perhaps less successful programs, the CFB150 created branding and marketing opportunities that would not have existed otherwise. Cases like the Cortaca Jug game between two Division III schools, a game that recorded an unprecedented 40,000 fans while being hosted at MetLife Stadium. For some marketers, the



CFB150 created a branding and marketing focal point with the structure and support from a large, overarching, and resourceful organization. Perhaps the opportunities, and successful ones at that, enabled by the CFB150 initiative were encapsulated best by one professional who explained the work done by their organization, “I think it shows from a marketer you never control the team success or the product on the field, but you do control the perception. And in a year where we struggled on the field, we were able to do some really cool things from a perception standpoint.” This only furthers the success of the CFB150 branding as brand equity was established through perception.

## **Implications**

The initial implication of this study is that it theoretically provides some additional literature to the relatively undeveloped topic of branding a major anniversary within sport. Sesquicentennial celebrations within sport are nearly unprecedented. The only other major sport anniversary of similar magnitude was conducted by Major League Baseball (MLB) during their 2019 season as they celebrated 150-years. However, the MLB initiative was surrounding 150-years of professional baseball, given the origin in 1869 with the Cincinnati Red Stockings (Adler, 2019). The celebration was not nearly as robust or of the same caliber as the CFB150 which includes 778 collegiate football programs, opposed to the 30 MLB teams. Instead the main focal point of the MLB 150-year celebration revolved around a jersey patch reading “MLB 150”, and the grander initiative did not take on nearly the breadth or depth as the extreme more encompassing CFB150 efforts. This was also the case with the recent celebration of the National Football League (NFL) 100-year celebration during the 2019-20 season. The “NFL 100” as it was deemed provided more avenues for engagement, selling “NFL 100” merchandise, adding promotional assets to stadiums and broadcasts, having famous NFL personalities rank their favorite moments, players,

etc., and more (“NFL 100”, 2019). Despite these increased efforts, the NFL is only composed of 32 NFL teams, and was only celebrating 100 years of history. This furthers the unprecedented and unique nature that the CFB150 had in celebrating 150-years of a sport with such diverse participation and history. Additionally, given that both the “MLB 150” and “NFL 100” both occurred in such proximity to the CFB150 initiative, there was little to no preexisting understanding on how to effectively conduct the branding of a major, organizational anniversary within sport let alone a sesquicentennial. With almost no prior literature or evaluation of branding a sesquicentennial within sport, this study may provide some insight into situation and effectiveness as such.

Other implications of this study are more practical in nature. One being this study being utilized to assist in the branding of major anniversaries in sport forthcoming. As sport organizations, teams, etc. approach major anniversary celebrations, especially that of a sesquicentennial, this study can perhaps provide information into the successful strategies, concepts, and more that were utilized by the CFB150 initiative. In branding as a greater scheme, this information may also be translated into effectively branding the major anniversary of other consumer goods or services. The implications of this research and analysis should assist in guiding successful anniversary branding initiatives in the future. Professionals in the branding or marketing field can utilize this study to plan their next branding or marketing campaign. This may be done through information surrounding successful logo development, promotional assets, social media engagement, and more that were done in the CFB150 campaign. Although major sport anniversaries are not celebrated very often, such as 150-years of college football, historic milestones occur annually. Through examining how the CFB150 best employed branding and retro marketing practices, marketers could better prepare and execute their anniversary celebrations.

Historic milestones may stem from a variety of areas within a sport brand or organization such as anniversary of venue, championship, significant play or contest, and more. Utilizing proper retro marketing practices are crucial to initiative and campaign success, as nostalgia can be elicited and as Ramshaw & Gammon (2005) identified, nostalgic feelings have been found to be an important factor in sport heritage overall. Additionally, as each year individuals are inducted into their respective professional and collegiate Halls of Fame, as marketers look to campaign this milestone, the branding and retro marketing practices of successfully celebrating sport history are crucial. Therefore, this research is applicable to the branding and marketing of these efforts both at an overarching, organizational level as well as for individual institutions and teams.

### **Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

Although there are implications of this study, limitations exist. The primary limitation is that the number of participating professionals was relatively small. Despite the author's confidence in the knowledge and overall appropriateness in the pool of subjects, the pool of applicants could have been larger. Additionally, the representation of subjects was isolated to those within the primary stakeholder organizations of the CFB150 initiative as well as participating Division I institutions. To examine a more wholistic understanding and analysis of the CFB150 at all levels of college football, additional interview subjects at Division I, II, III as well as NAIA and independent schools should be interviewed. Finally, the scope of the study was a limitation. Given the close timeline the study was conducted in relation to the CFB150 initiative, further data regarding the implications of the initiative could not be identified and analyzed. However, this leads directly into the avenues for future research.

It would be beneficial for future research to examine the wholistic, quantitative impact that the CFB150 had on game attendance, ticket sales, and other metrics. These can be examined both

in comparison to past metrics from seasons before the CFB150 initiative, as well as metrics that occur in years after the CFB150 initiative was conducted. A more quantitative look into how the CFB150 effected engagement, participation, and consumption in college football both during the 150-year anniversary season, and in the years surrounding it would showcase the influence the initiative had.

Perhaps the most intriguing area of future study would be to quantitatively examine the impact of the CFB150 initiative on attendance numbers, tickets sales, etc. at different participating institutions. By conducting a statistical analysis regarding the size of the institution, or perhaps historic success of the institution's football program, as it relates to the engagement and consumption of the CFB150 initiative, the relationship between the variables could be identified. This would give insight into how size or success of an institution effects the impact of major sport anniversaries or branding and marketing tactics on a grander scale. The results could perhaps be translated into the impact of size (of market) or success of organization in different sports or sport leagues.

Another area of future research is the comparison between the CFB150 initiative in college football to other major sport anniversaries. This could be done in contrast to the MLB 150 initiative, the NFL 100, or other future major sport anniversaries. Qualitative examinations such as examples of branding, retro marketing, and more could be examined, which may showcase the different audiences that are reached, differentiation in best practices, and other findings. A quantitative analysis could also be done between major sport anniversaries, as to examine the engagement metrics via social media interaction, sales numbers, attendance, etc. as they are impacted by the celebration initiatives of a major sport anniversary.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A

#### Questions:

- What is your name, current title, and what organization do you work for?
- How long have you been at your current organization?
- What do your normal college football marketing initiatives consist of?
- How did your institution market the College Football 150-year Anniversary?
  - Jersey patch
  - Helmet Sticker
  - Broadcast ad
  - Other
- How did an institutions college football history effect marketing efforts?
- Are there themes in the way different size/division institutions market CFB 150?
- Did your institution have a goal for marketing the CFB 150?
  - Was it met?
  - **Main goals:**
    - High public awareness
    - Participation
    - Promote public sentiment
- Would you deem your CFB 150 marketing initiatives successful?
  - In which ways? Why or why not?
- Is there a specific party that interacted most with the CFB 150 initiative?
  - Alumni
  - Fans
  - Former Student-athletes
- Did you feel as though your participation in CFB was voluntary? (What was your view of participation)
- Was there an incentive for participating? (Did it feel like a chore?)
- Was there an overall impact of the CFB 150 initiative?
  - Increase awareness of the game in general, its history, etc.?
  - Ticket Sales
  - Jersey Sales
  - Attending events
- How much impact can be attributed to CFB?

#### Additional Questions:

- Did your institution have any athletes, players, coaches, games named as the ‘Best of...’ CFB 150?
  - If yes...what was the effect? How was this marketed? What was the impact?
- Does the popularity of your institutions college football team influence the CFB 150 initiative?
- On what media platform did you see CFB 150 initiatives work best?
  - In what ways were they done?
- Did the current success of the team impact the effects of CFB 150?

## Appendix B

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124 Main Street  
Durham, NH 03824

**IRB #:** 8273

**Study:** Marketing College Football 150-year Anniversary

**Approval Date:** 24-Mar-2020

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB) has reviewed and approved the protocol for your study as Exempt as described in Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 46, Subsection 104(d). Approval is granted to conduct your study as described in your protocol.

Researchers who conduct studies involving human subjects have responsibilities as outlined in the attached document, *Responsibilities of Directors of Research Studies Involving Human Subjects*. (This document is also available at <http://unh.edu/research/irb-application-resources>.) Please read this document carefully before commencing your work involving human subjects.

Note: IRB approval is separate from UNH Purchasing approval of any proposed methods of paying study participants. Before making any payments to study participants, researchers should consult with their BSC or UNH Purchasing to ensure they are complying with institutional requirements. If such institutional requirements are not consistent with the confidentiality or anonymity assurances in the IRB-approved protocol and consent documents, the researcher may need to request a modification from the IRB.

Upon completion of your study, please complete the enclosed Exempt Study Final Report form and return it to this office along with a report of your findings.

If you have questions or concerns about your study or this approval, please feel free to contact Melissa McGee at 603-862-2005 or [melissa.mcgee@unh.edu](mailto:melissa.mcgee@unh.edu). Please refer to the IRB # above in all correspondence related to this study. The IRB wishes you success with your research.

For the IRB,



Julie F. Simpson  
Director

cc: File  
Scola, Zachary